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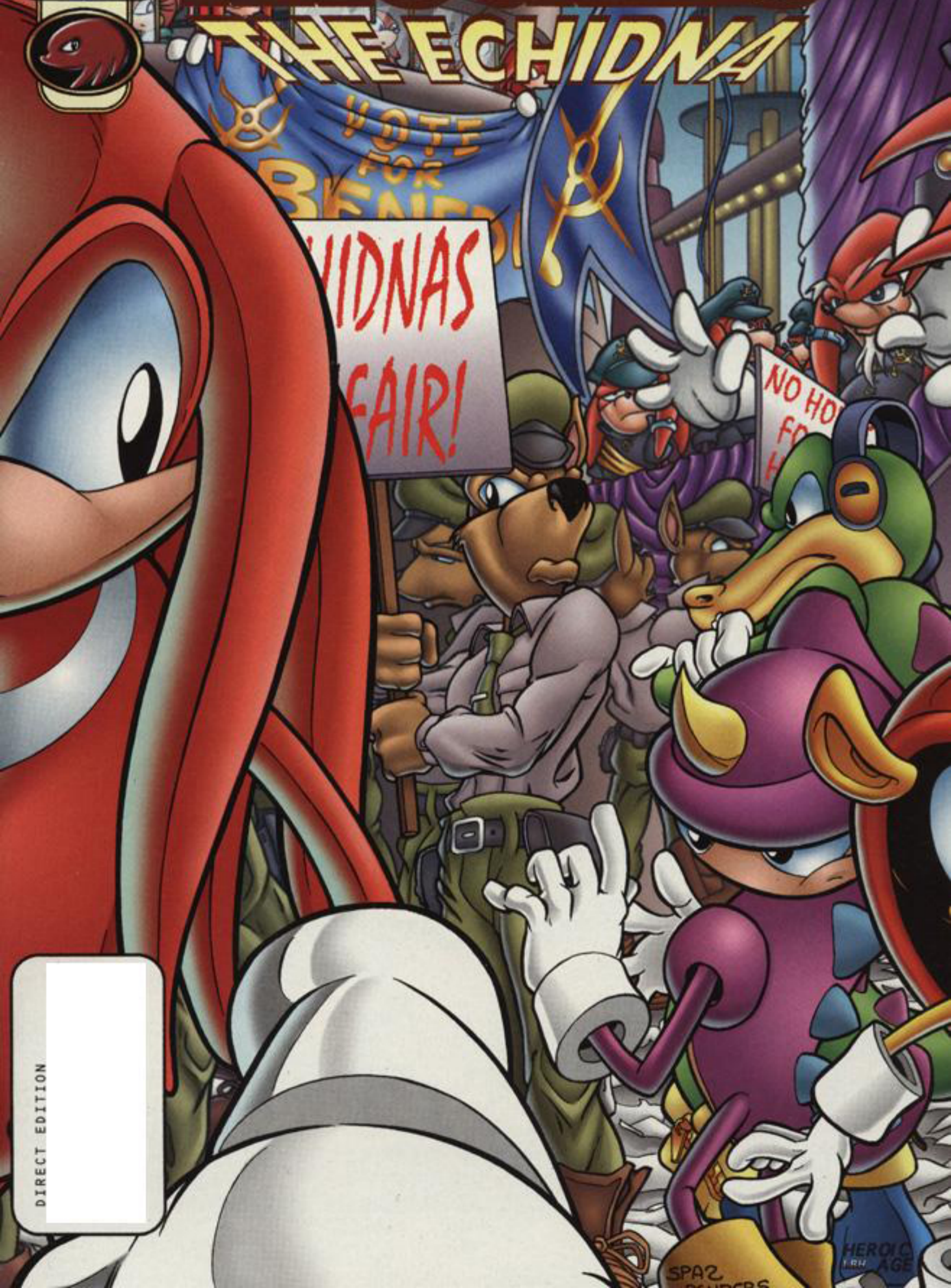
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Enter The Exotic And Exciting World Of...

KNUCKLES™

THE ECHIDNA

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



DIRECT EDITION

SPAZ
MURCERS

HEROIC
IRH AGE

GNUCKLES™

BOOK TWENTY-TWO

DARK ALLIANCE

PART ONE OF THREE

KEN PENDERS

WRITER

JIM VALENTINO

PENCILER

HARVEY MERCADOOCASIO

INKER

BARRY GROSSMAN

COLORIST

VICKIE WILLIAMS

LETTERER

J.F. GABRIE

EDITOR

VICTOR GORELICK

MANAGING EDITOR

RICHARD GOLDWATER

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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BORN TO THE MOST NOBLE OF ECHIDNA HOUSES, THE LATEST TO CONTINUE THE FAMILY HERITAGE AND RESPONSIBILITY AS GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND, DEFENDER OF ALL THE FORCES OF EVIL FROM THE WORLD BEYOND AS WELL AS THOSE WHO WOULD THREATEN FROM WITHIN!

ARCHIE COMICS AND SEGA PRESENT...
GNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA!



ROBOTROPOLIS, 3228:

"DURING DOCTOR ROBOTNIK'S TAKE-OVER THROUGH ROBOTICIZATION, THE SWATBOTS CAME FOR THE FOXES, AND I DID NOT SPEAK UP BECAUSE I WAS NOT A FOX. THEN THEY CAME FOR THE RABBITS, AND I DID NOT SPEAK UP BECAUSE I WAS NOT A RABBIT. THEN THEY CAME FOR THE SQUIRRELS, BUT I DID NOT SPEAK UP BECAUSE I WAS NOT A SQUIRREL. THEN THEY CAME FOR THE HEDGEHOGS, AND I DID NOT SPEAK UP BECAUSE I WAS AN ECHIDNA. THEN THEY CAME FOR ME, AND BY THAT TIME NOBODY WAS LEFT TO SPEAK UP."

ANONYMOUS



WHAT IN BLAZES--??!



THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS!

MORE THAN LIKELY, IT'S DINGO TRASH UP TO NO GOOD!



NOW, SEE HERE--!!!



OH, MY WORD!



GOOD EVENING, HIGH COUNCILOR!

WE'D LIKE TO HAVE A WORD WITH YOU!

NO! NO!!

YOU'VE BEEN SO OUTSPOKEN IN YOUR AVERSION TO OUR TECHNOLOGY THAT WE WANTED TO FIND OUT WHY!



AHA!

WIDE-SCREEN HIGH-DEFINITION TV--VIDEOPHONE--CLOSED CIRCUIT SECURITY MONITOR SYSTEM--TO SAY NOTHING OF ALL THE DOO-DADS AND GADGETS LYING ABOUT.

QUITE A COLLECTION FOR SUCH AN AVID TECHNOPHOBE!

WHY, YOUR AVERAGE CITIZEN BARELY HAS THE BASICS!



YOU THINK THEY'LL FEEL SORRY FOR YOU ONCE THEY LEARN THE TRUTH?

ESCORT THE HIGH COUNCILOR BACK TO THE CENTRE!

ONCE WORD OF THIS GETS OUT--

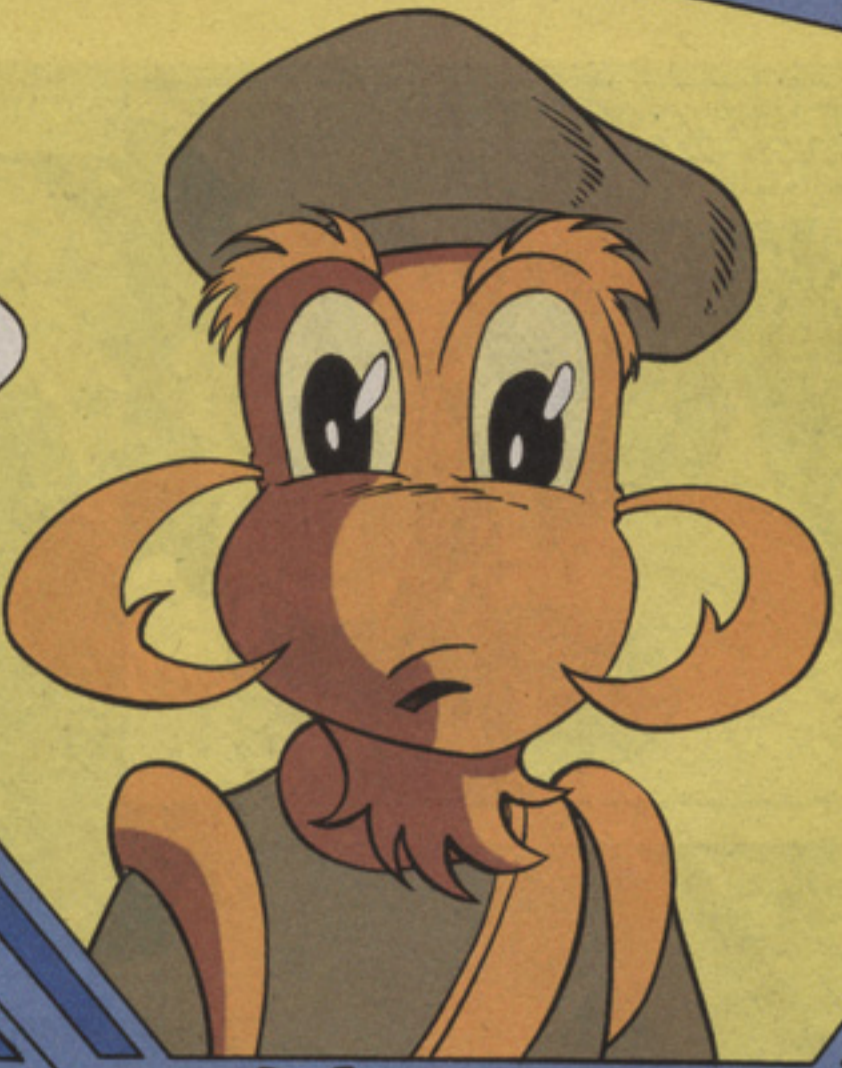


"--WE'LL SOON FIND OUT WHO OUR TRUE FRIENDS AND ALLIES ARE!"

HOW DO I KNOW YOU GUYS ARE ON THE LEVEL ABOUT MY FATHER?

HOW DO I EVEN KNOW YOU'RE WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE?

WHAT KIND OF A FAMILY KEEPS EVERYTHING SUCH A SECRET?



IF THERE'S ANYTHING I UNDERSTAND--

YOU SAY YOU WANT A

MY BOY, IF THERE'S ANY ONE THING I REGRET--IT'S THAT WE DID KEEP YOU IN THE DARK FAR LONGER THAN WE SHOULD HAVE!

YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND, WE DID IT WITH YOUR BEST INTERESTS IN MIND!



REVOLUTION...

--IT'S THAT I'VE BEEN SOLD A LOAD OF MAMUA EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER!



AND I'LL BET MY FATHER IS PART OF THIS WHOLE SHEEBANG!

DON'T BE SO QUICK TO JUDGE EITHER HIM OR US, M'BOY!

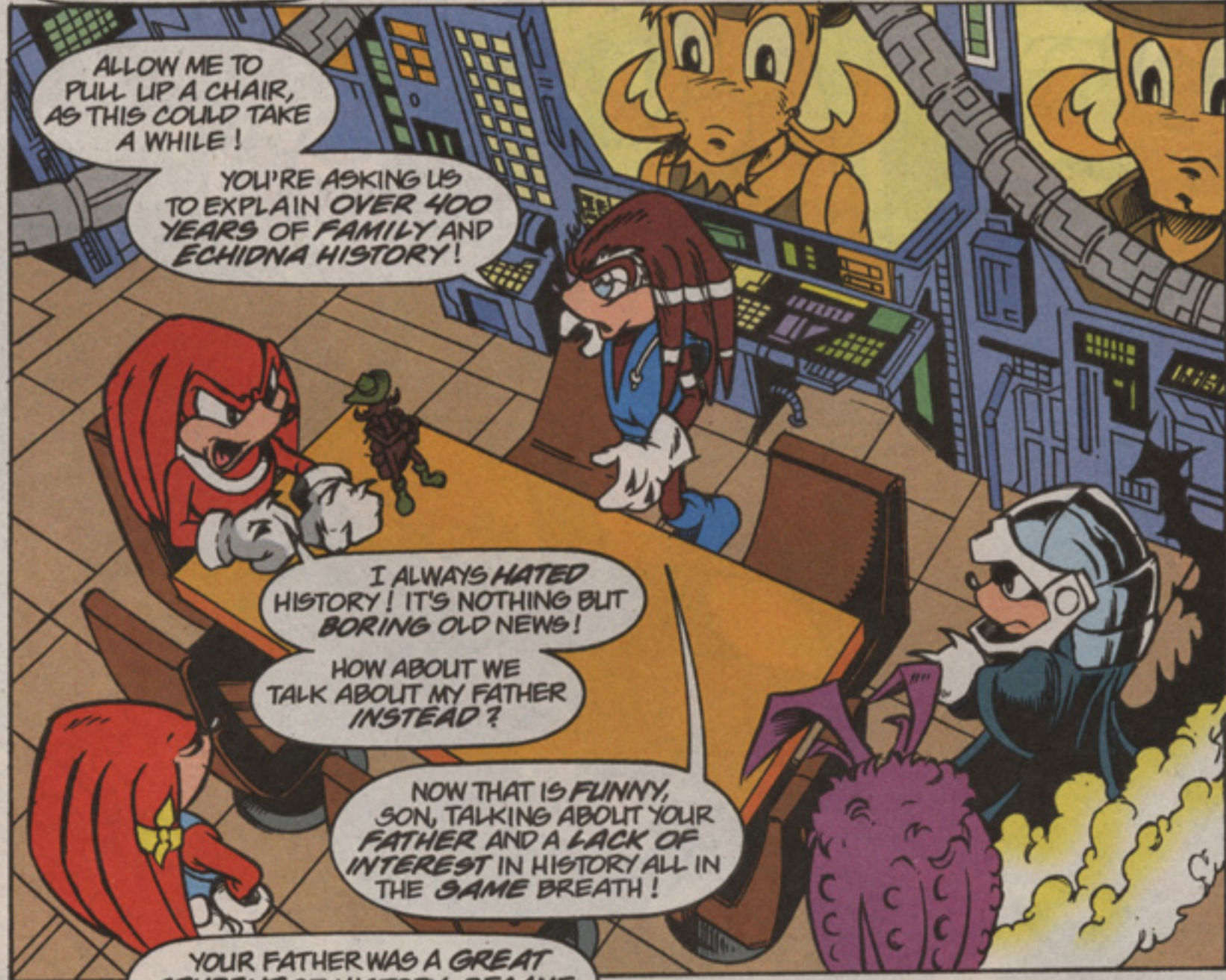
THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO THIS THAN YOU COULD IMAGINE!



TRY ME!

ALLOW ME TO PULL UP A CHAIR, AS THIS COULD TAKE A WHILE!

YOU'RE ASKING US TO EXPLAIN OVER 400 YEARS OF FAMILY AND ECHIDNA HISTORY!



I ALWAYS HATED HISTORY! IT'S NOTHING BUT BORING OLD NEWS!

HOW ABOUT WE TALK ABOUT MY FATHER INSTEAD?

NOW THAT IS FUNNY, SON, TALKING ABOUT YOUR FATHER AND A LACK OF INTEREST IN HISTORY ALL IN THE SAME BREATH!

YOUR FATHER WAS A GREAT STUDENT OF HISTORY, BECAME OBSESSED WITH IT, IN FACT!

WHICH IS WHY WE'RE CONCERNED ABOUT YOU!

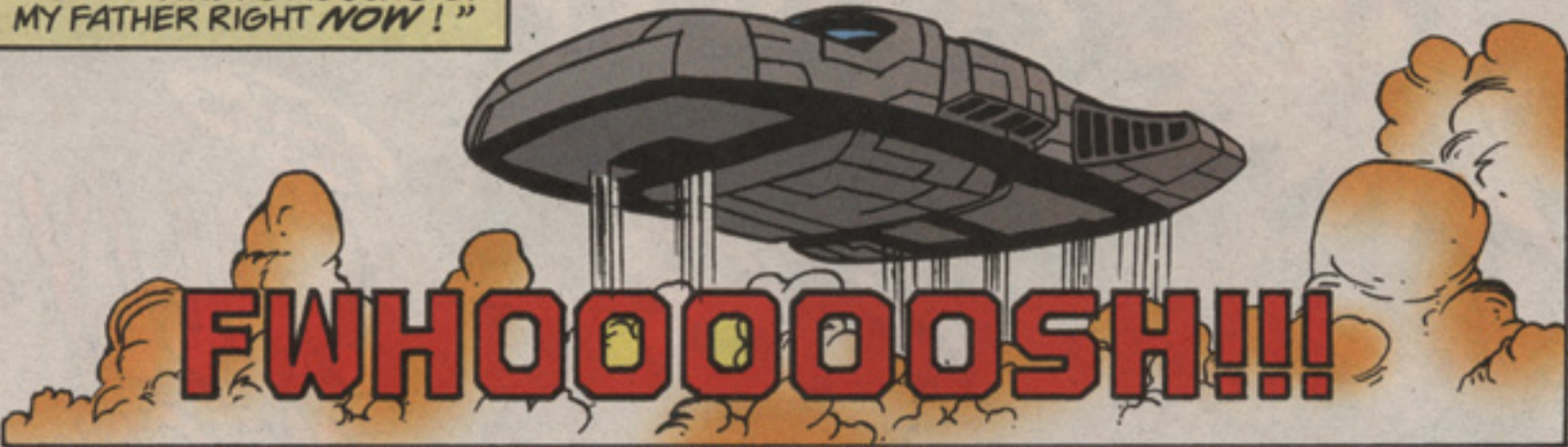


I'M DOING JUST FINE, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

ALL I WANT TO KNOW--



"--IS THE WHEREABOUTS OF MY FATHER RIGHT NOW!"



FWHOOOOOSH!!!



PERMISSION TO SPEAK FREELY, SIR?

CERTAINLY, CONSTABLE!

I TAKE IT THINGS DIDN'T GO WELL BETWEEN YOU AND THE LADY LARA-LE?



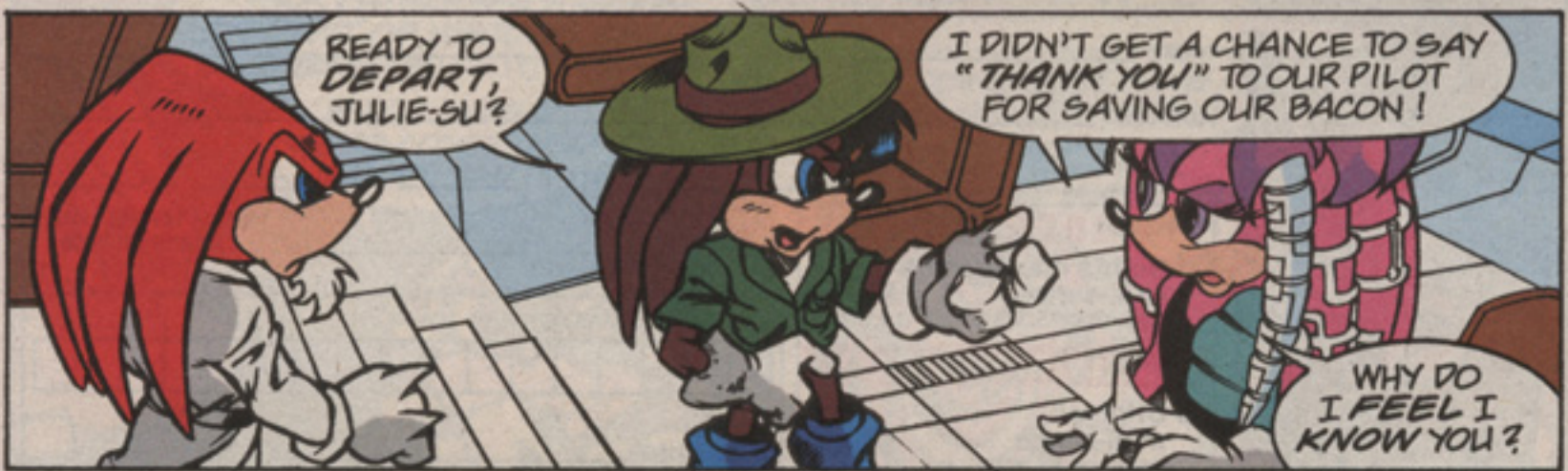
PRETTY MUCH WHAT I EXPECTED, UNFORTUNATELY.

THE DIFFERENCES ARE MORE THAN WE'RE ABLE TO SURMOUNT!



I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT!

DON'T BE! SOMETIMES THESE THINGS ARE BEYOND ANYONE'S ABILITY TO WORK OUT!



READY TO DEPART, JULIE-SU?

I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO SAY "THANK YOU" TO OUR PILOT FOR SAVING OUR BACON!

WHY DO I FEEL I KNOW YOU?



BECAUSE I AM MY SON'S FATHER, AND YOU KNOW HIM AS **KNUCKLES!**

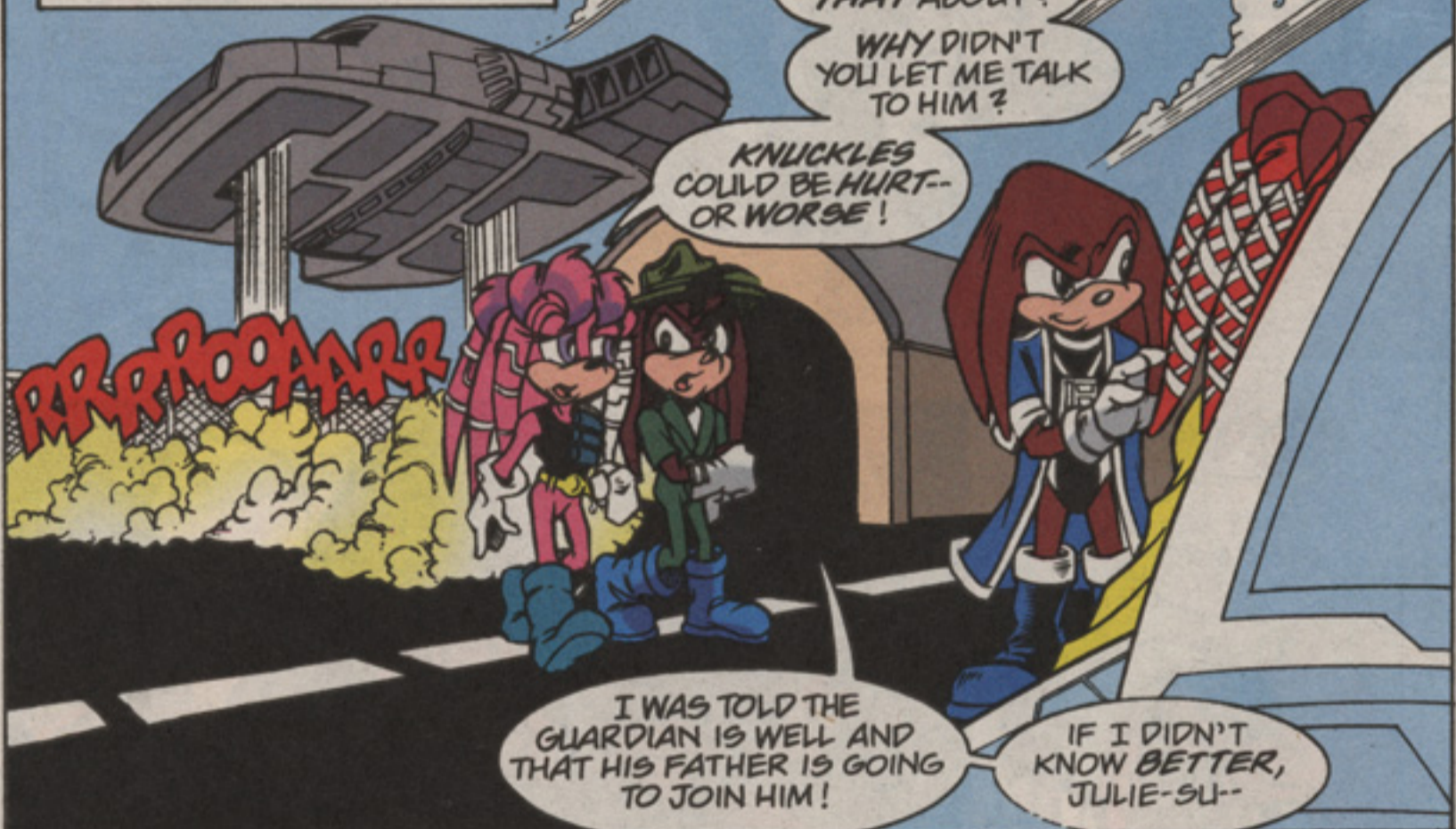
YOU'RE--?!!

OH, WOW!

I'M SURE HE'S QUITE WELL, JULIE-SU!

HAVE YOU SEEN **KNUCKLES?** IS HE ALL RIGHT?

THIS WAY, IF YOU PLEASE.



WHAT WAS ALL THAT ABOUT?

WHY DIDN'T YOU LET ME TALK TO HIM?

KNUCKLES COULD BE HURT--OR WORSE!

I WAS TOLD THE GUARDIAN IS WELL AND THAT HIS FATHER IS GOING TO JOIN HIM!

IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, JULIE-SU--

"-- I'D THINK YOU ACTUALLY CARED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO **KNUCKLES!**"



I CAN WELL IMAGINE WHAT MUST BE GOING THROUGH THE BOY'S HEAD!

HE'S PROBABLY MAD AT THE WORLD-- AND ESPECIALLY ME!

IF I KNOW **KNUCKLES**, HE'S PROBABLY GONE TO BE BY HIMSELF--

"--AT THE ONE PLACE
WE'D LEAST LIKELY
TO SUSPECT!"

WH-WHERE ARE
YOU TAKING ME?
HAVEN'T YOU DONE
ENOUGH?

LET ME GO!
LET ME GO,
I SAY!!



QUIET,
YOU
PATHETIC
LITTLE
WORM!



YOU'LL DO
WHAT WE TELL
YOU WHEN WE
TELL YOU!

Ooow!

CAN'T WE
DISCUSS
THIS?!



I'M SURE
WE CAN MAKE A
DEAL!!



DEAL?

DID YOU
SAY YOU WISH
TO MAKE A
DEAL?

THAT REALLY AMUSES
ME HEARING YOU SAY THAT,
YOU SANCTIMONIOUS
HYPOCRITE! *

YOUR
FAMILY HASN'T
CHANGED ONE
BIT--

--STIR UP THE
CROWDS TO OPPOSE WHAT
IS RIGHTFULLY THEIRS
WHILE YOUR KIND
CONTROLS ALL THE FRUITS
OF OTHERS' LABOR!

YOUR ANCESTORS
NEVER OFFERED ME ANY DEAL
WHEN MY BROTHER AND I SOUGHT
TO RESTORE OUR HOMELAND TO
THE MOTHER WORLD** ALMOST
400 YEARS AGO!

NOW IT'S PAYBACK
TIME, AND YOU KNOW WHAT
THEY SAY ABOUT THAT--

* PRETENDING TO HOLD BELIEFS, FEELINGS
OR VIRTUES THAT ONE DOES NOT HOLD OR
POSSESS AND FEELING TOTALLY RIGHTEOUS
ABOUT IT--EDITOR ARMED WITH A DICTIONARY.

** SEE SONIC # 34-36, "SENSE
OF HISTORY-- JFG,

"--IT'S LIKE AN ITCH,
ONLY MEANER!"

HOW MUCH FURTHER, CONSTABLE?
WE SEEM TO BE TAKING THE
LONG WAY HOME!

SEEMS WE
HAVE A CROWD
UP AHEAD--

--THEY'LL
JUST STEP ASIDE
ONCE WE GET
CLOSER!

NO, THEY
WON'T!!

CRIPES!!!

SCREEEECH!

D'YA THINK THEY HAVE
A PERMIT FOR THIS SORT
OF THING, SIR?

WE CAN ALWAYS
BUST THEM IF
THEY DON'T!

KEEP A LID
ON IT, DEPUTY!
I DON'T WANNA
BLOW THIS OUT OF
PROPORTION!

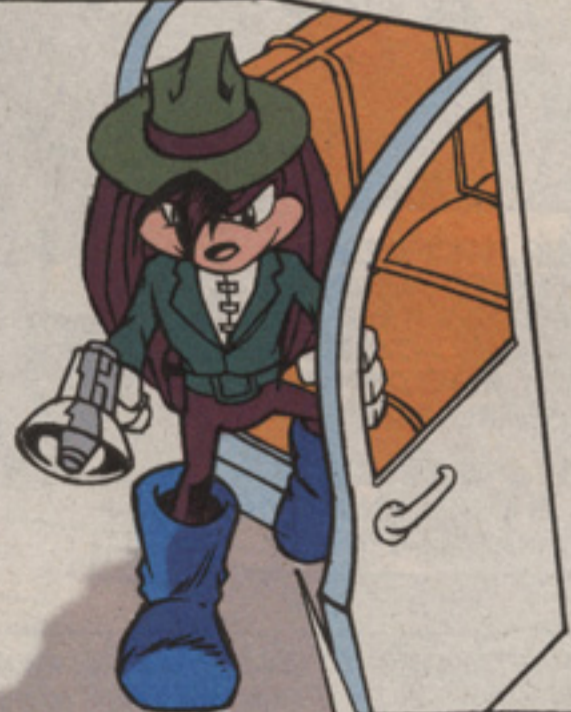
GEOFF
GET A GANDER OVER
THERE! IT'S THE
JACKBOOTS!

THEY WON'T TOUCH US!
NOT IF THEY DON'T WANT OTHER
ECHIDNAS TO FEEL SYMPATHETIC
TO OUR CAUSE!

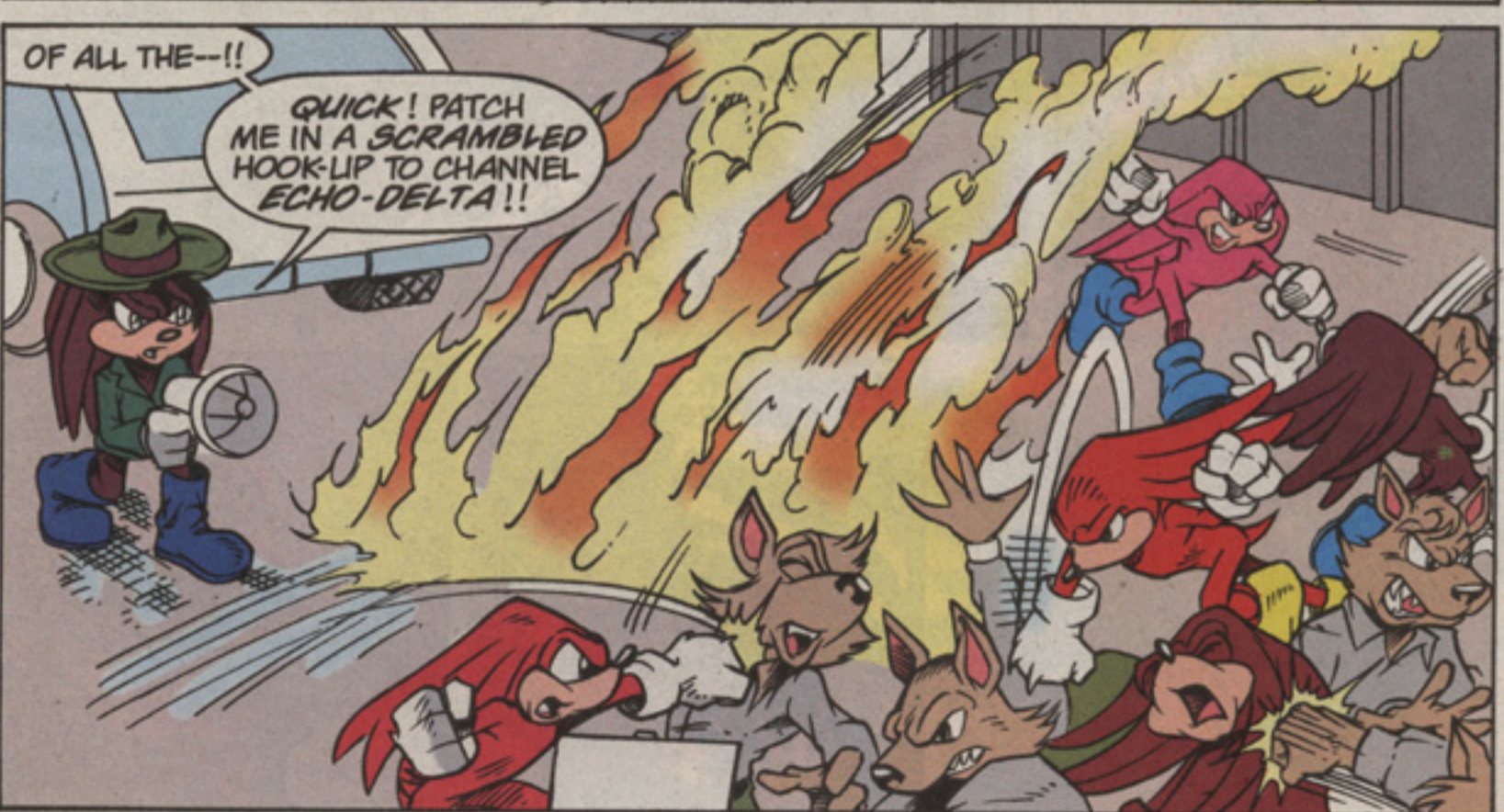
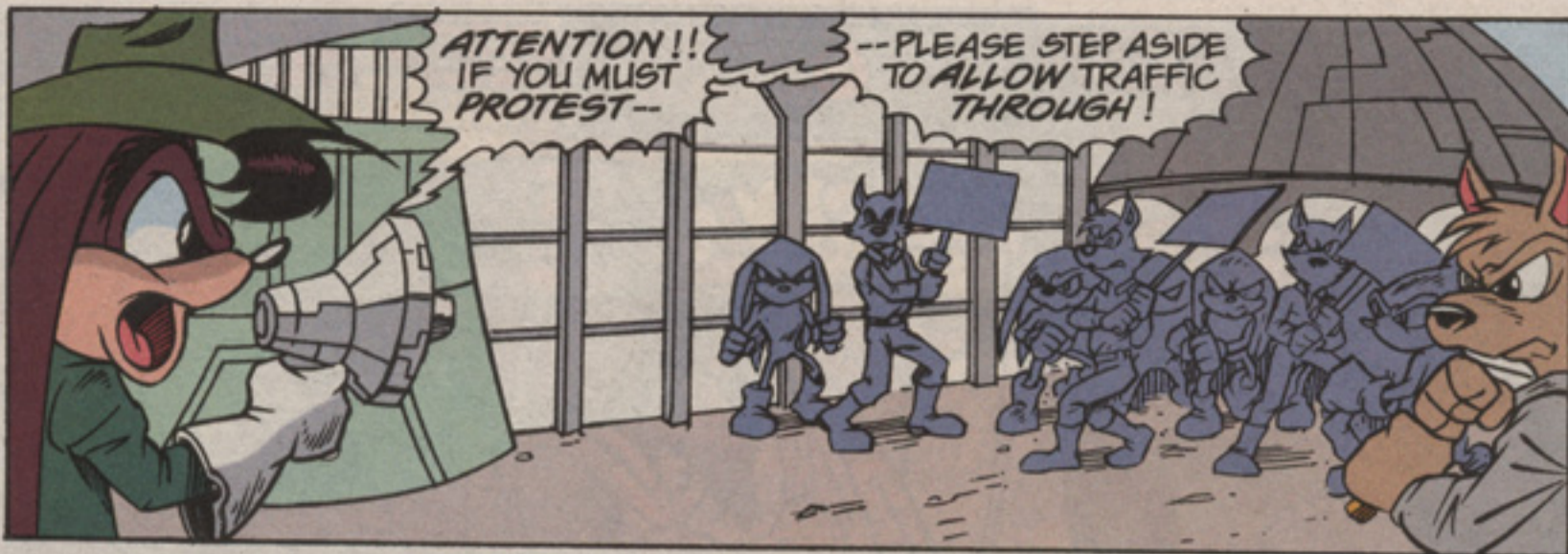
ECHIDNAS
UNFAIR

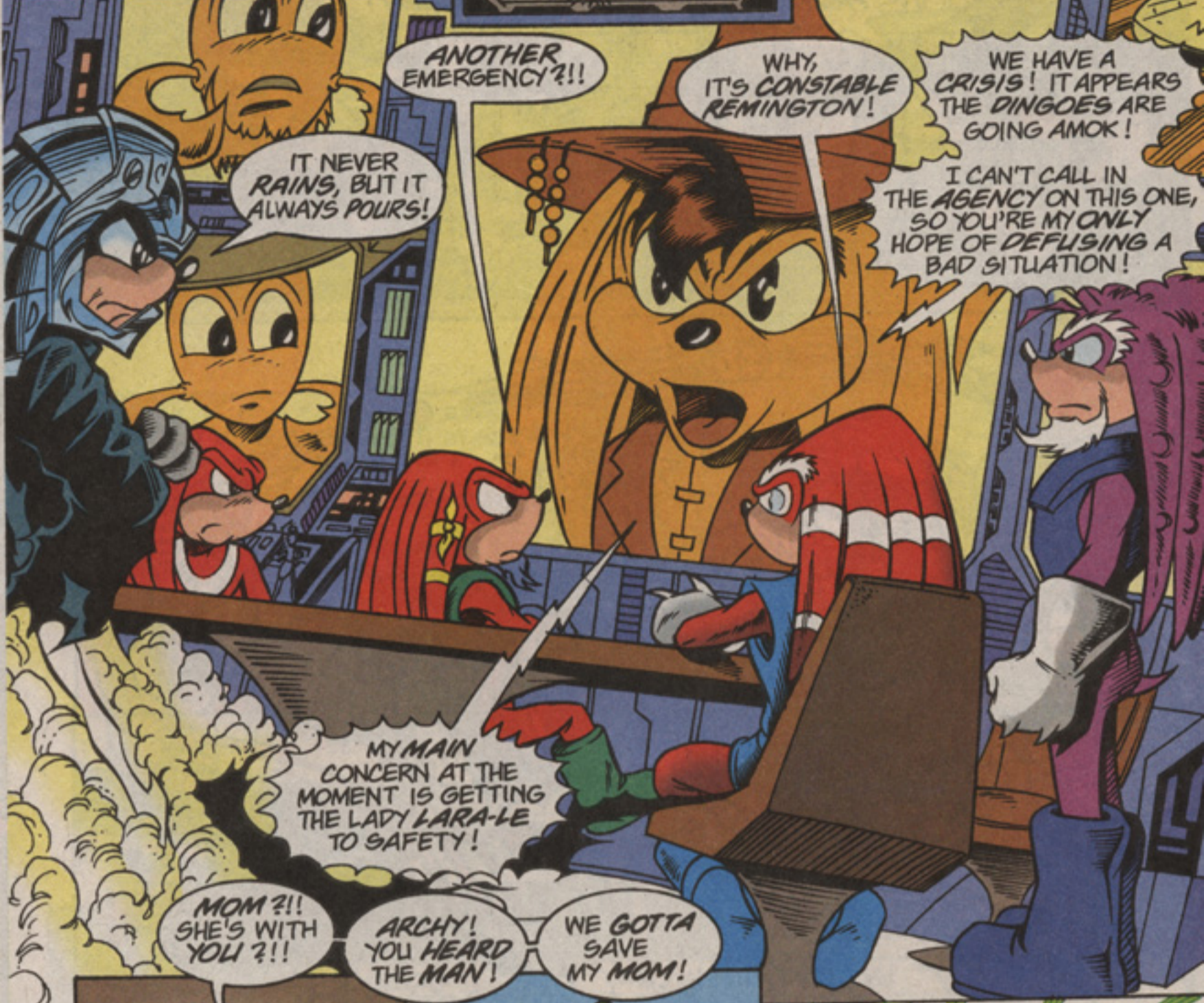
WINGLES
HAVE
NEEDS

TRUST
NO



HERE'S HOPING
I CAN REASON WITH
THE COOLER HEADS
AMONG THAT CROWD!





ANOTHER EMERGENCY?!!

WHY, IT'S CONSTABLE REMINGTON!

WE HAVE A CRISIS! IT APPEARS THE DINGOES ARE GOING AMOK!

IT NEVER RAINS, BUT IT ALWAYS POURS!

I CAN'T CALL IN THE AGENCY ON THIS ONE, SO YOU'RE MY ONLY HOPE OF DEFUSING A BAD SITUATION!

MY MAIN CONCERN AT THE MOMENT IS GETTING THE LADY LARA-LE TO SAFETY!

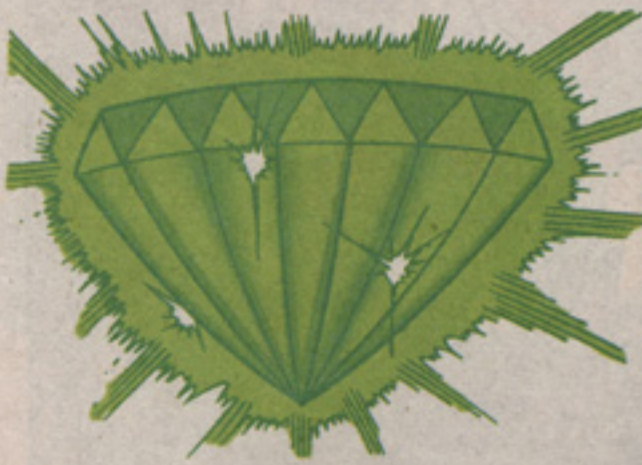
MOM?!! SHE'S WITH YOU?!!

ARCHY! YOU HEARD THE MAN!

WE GOTTA SAVE MY MOM!



BACK IN ACTION TOGETHER AGAIN, HUH?



LET'S GO MAKE LIKE HEROES, M'BOY!!

BAM!



I DON'T KNOW WHICH IS WORSE--

" -- HAVING TO ANSWER THAT BOY'S QUESTIONS OR JUST STANDING BY AS HE TAKES CARE OF BUSINESS! "

I CAN'T PUT THIS OFF ANY LONGER!

HOWEVER NOBLE AND GOOD MY INTENTIONS WERE, I SHOULD'VE THOUGHT OF KNUCKLES FIRST AND FOREMOST!

MUCH AS IT PAINS ME TO ADMIT IT, LARA WAS RIGHT--

--I REALLY HAVEN'T BEEN MUCH OF A PARENT!

MAYBE CERTAIN THINGS WORKED WELL IN THE PAST, BUT TIMES HAVE CHANGED, AND PERHAPS I DIDN'T CHANGE ENOUGH WITH THEM!

KNUCKLES!

KNUCKLES!

EVIDENTLY, THE LAD ISN'T HERE!

WHICH IS JUST AS WELL--

--GIVEN HOW UNCERTAIN I AM AT WHAT I SHOULD SAY!

FOR ONE THING--

"--I SINCERELY DOUBT SIMPLY SAYING 'I'M SORRY' MAKES UP FOR IT!"



WHOA, ARCHY!

THEY'RE AWFULLY FRIENDLY AROUND HERE!

EVIDENTLY NOBODY WANTS TO GET ALONG, M'BOY!

AT THE VERY LEAST, ECHIDNAS AND DINGOES, Y'MEAN!



INCOMING!



NOW WHERE'S MY MOM?

YOU SEE HER ANYWHERE IN THIS MESS, ARCHY?

ECHIDNAS NEAR!

DINGOES



LUCKY FOR YOU--

FWA-VOOSH!

GYAAHHH!



I DON'T GET IT! HOW COULD THINGS FALL APART LIKE THIS?

-- I SAW HIM COMING!



I WAS WONDERING THAT VERY SAME THING MYSELF!

HUH? WHO--?

GENERAL VON STRYKER!! SIR!!!



THIS IS PATHETIC!

HAVE WE FALLEN SO FAR THAT WE ARE REDUCED TO BEGGING FOR SCRAPS FROM ECHIDNA TABLES?



BEGGING YOUR PARDON, GENERAL --

-- BUT I'M NONE TOO PROUD OF ECHIDNA BEHAVIOR EITHER!

WHAM!



WHADDYA SAY WE HAVE A COOLING OFF PERIOD FOR BOTH SIDES WHILE WE FIGURE OUT HOW TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM?

BY THE WAY, WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?



TOO MANY BROKEN ECHIDNA PROMISES!

AND I SWEAR, IF YOU AND YOURS DON'T MAKE GOOD THIS TIME--

-- YOU'LL HAVE WISHED YOU GOT RID OF US INSTEAD!



NOW THAT'S A HAPPY THOUGHT--

"-- TOO BAD I'M ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS! "



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!!

WAIT!!! NO!! NOOOO!!

DON'T DO THIS!!! PLEASE!!!

I BEG YOU!!

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

THE PATIENT IS UNDER, DOCTOR!

HE SHOULDN'T FEEL A THING!

HE WON'T EVEN REMEMBER BEING ON THIS TABLE ONCE WE'RE THROUGH!

LET'S MAKE THE INITIAL INCISION INTO THE SKULL OVER HERE!

WHAT A PITY--

--IT ISN'T YOUR ANCESTOR LYING THERE IN YOUR STEAD!

I CAN STILL SEE THE SMUG LOOK ON HIS FACE--

"--WHEN EDMUND AND I CONFRONTED MENTHOR BEFORE OUR PRESENTATION TO THE ASSEMBLED CHAMBER..."

--AND WITH YOUR SUPPORT, THAT WOULD ENCOURAGE THE COUNCIL TO GO ALONG.

DIMITRI, DIMITRI--
--IF THIS PLAN OF YOURS SUCCEEDS, YOU'LL BE A HERO TO ALL--
--AND THAT WOULD UPSET MY PLANS!

THEREFORE, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DENOUNCE IT FOR THE HERESAY THAT IT IS!

YOU CAN'T DO THAT!!

BUT HE DID--

THE HIGH COUNCILOR DENIED OUR PETITION--

"IT WAS OBVIOUS NO MATTER WHAT EDMUND OR I SAID, THE FIX WAS IN..."

THE DECISION STANDS!

BACK THEN, I WASN'T THINKING STRAIGHT AND AS ENERJAK, I WAS CONSUMED WITH MY OWN POWER. MY CARELESSNESS RESULTED IN MY DOWNFALL!

NOT THIS TIME, HOWEVER!

THIS TIME--

"...VENGEANCE WILL BE MINE!"



KNUCKLES!

HEY, GUYS! MISS ME?

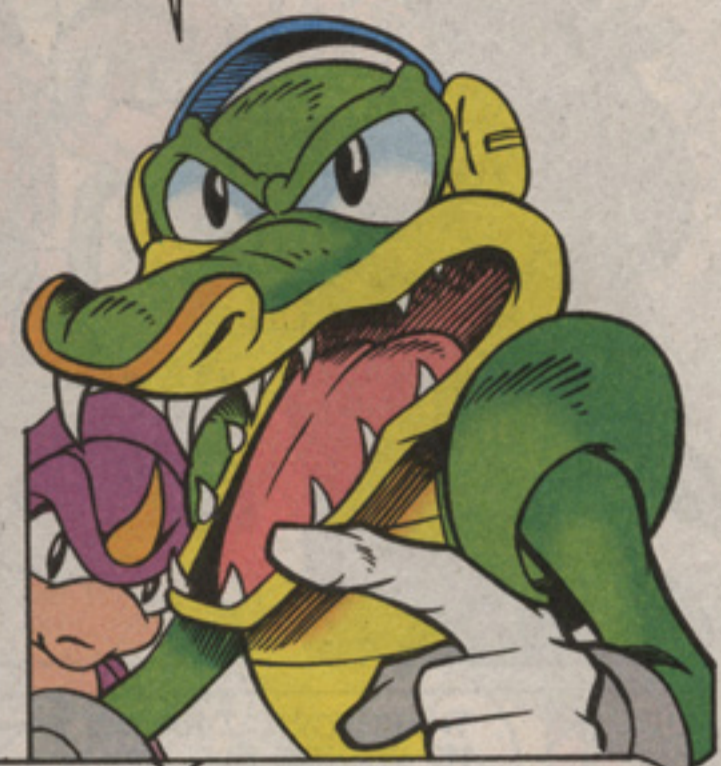
COMPADRE!

YO' THERE! IT'S THE HOMEBOY!

BAMF!

WHERE YA BEEN, KNUX?

EVERYTIME WE TURN AROUND, YOU'RE OUTTA TOWN!



I WAS CHECKING IN WITH MY MOM TO SEE IF SHE WAS OKAY!

IT GOT KIND OF HAIRY WITH THE DINGOES DEMONSTRATING NEAR HER APARTMENT!

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

THE WHOLE CITY SEEMS TO BE ON EDGE LATELY!



I MAY BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN THAT ONE!

JULIE-SU!



TALK TO ME, GIRL!

THE WAY I HEAR IT, THE HIGH COUNCIL HASN'T LIFTED A FINGER TO SPEED ALONG PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTING HOUSES FOR DINGOES!

WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN WHY THEY'RE ORNERY!

BUT WHY PROTEST NOW? WHY NOT BEFORE?

THE ELECTIONS FOR THE HIGH COUNCIL ARE COMING UP!

WHOEVER GETS VOTED IN COULD EITHER ADVANCE--

--OR THROW A MONKEY WRENCH IN THE PROGRAM!

AND SINCE YOUR AVERAGE CITIZEN HASN'T WEIGHED IN WITH AN OPINION FOR OR AGAINST--

--NOBODY HAS ANY CLUE WHAT THE SMART COURSE OF ACTION IS!

EXACTLY!

AND IT GETS EVEN BETTER!

I'M ALL EARS!

THERE HASN'T BEEN ANY SIGHTING OF PRAVDA, THE ANTI-TECH COUNCILOR SINCE LAST NIGHT!

ANY REASON GIVEN FOR HIS DISAPPEARING ACT?

HIS WIFE ISN'T TALKING, APPARENTLY, SHE'S SPOOKED OUT OF HER MIND!

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

LET'S JUST SAY A LITTLE BIRDIE TOLD ME.

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED IT OUT, KNUX--

-- SHE'S GOT FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES!

I'LL BE SURE TO TELL THE CONSTABLE THAT WHEN WE SEE HIM!

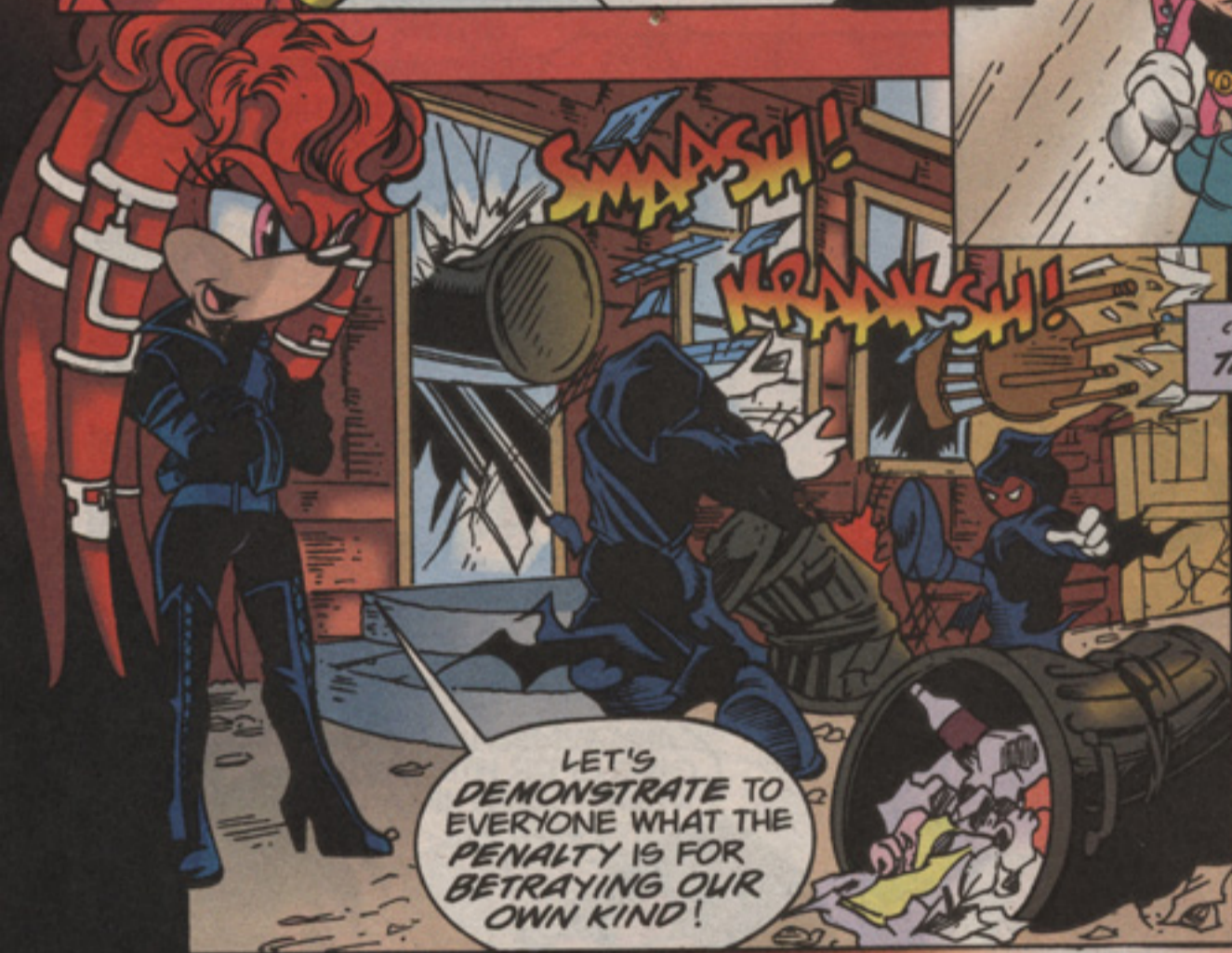
HE ASKED ME TO FIND YOU GUYS--



-- AND ARRANGE A MEETING!



YOU WOULDN'T BE YANKIN' MY CHAIN NOW, DOLLFACE?



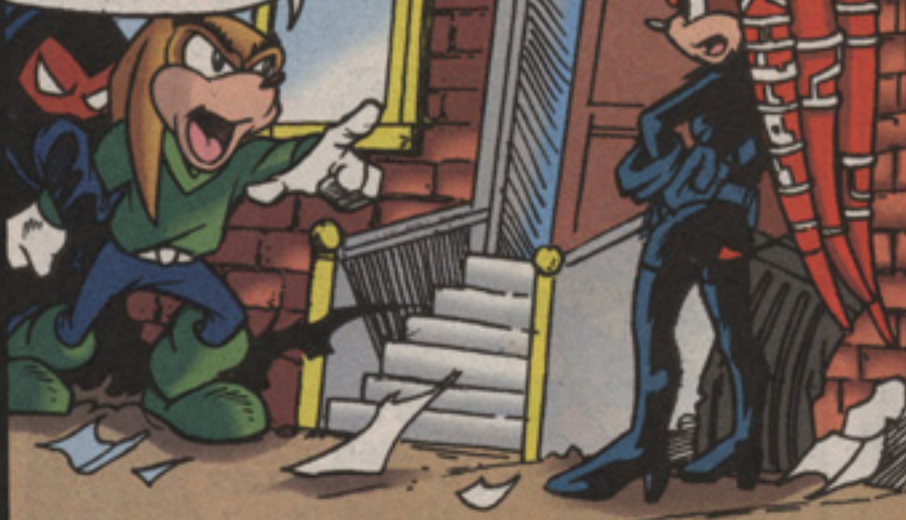
SMASH!
KRAANKSH!

" WOULD I DO THAT, VECTOR? "

LET'S DEMONSTRATE TO EVERYONE WHAT THE PENALTY IS FOR BETRAYING OUR OWN KIND!

WE HAVE NO QUARREL WITH YOU! WE JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE!

IT WOULD APPEAR THE JELLYFISH HAS A SPINE!



SHOW THIS TOAD WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO DON'T SUPPORT OUR SIDE!

BEAT THIS MISCREANT SENSELESSLY!





MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM KOMMISSAR!

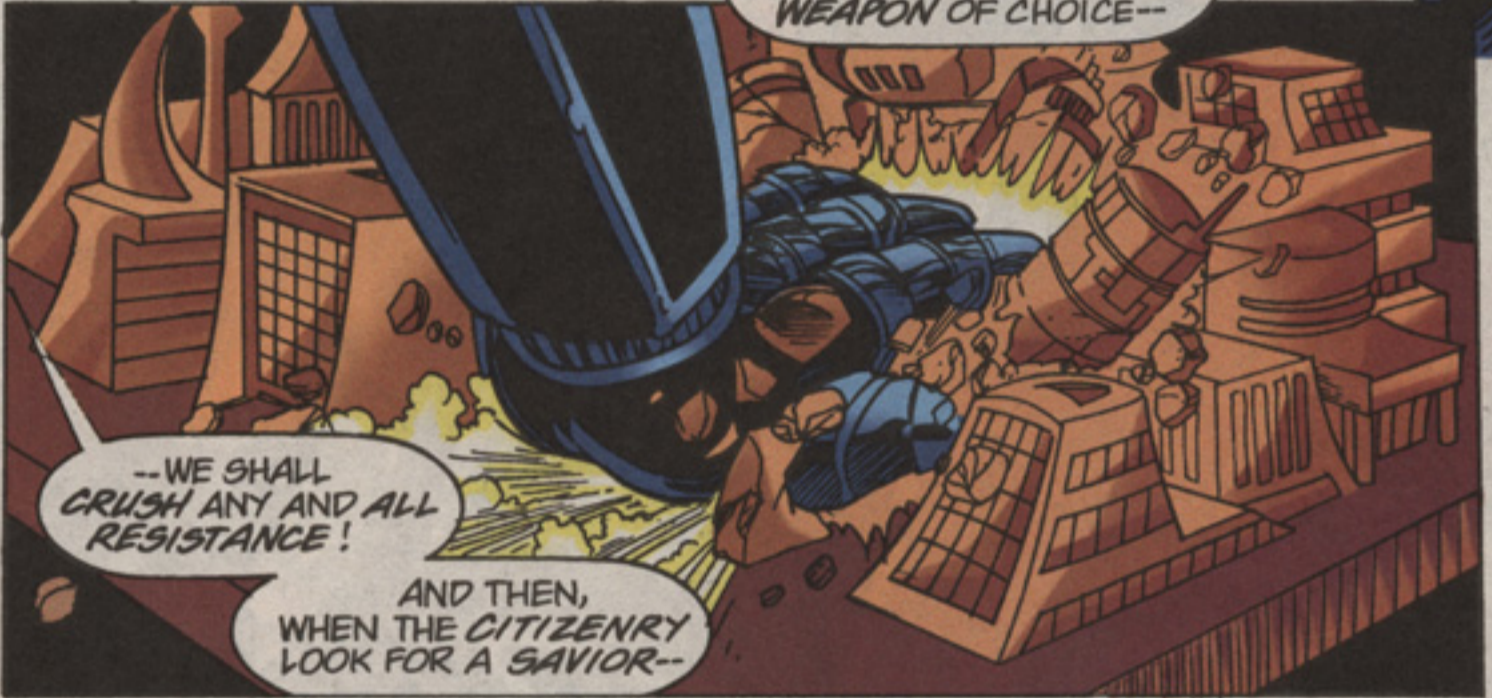
THE INSURRECTION HAS BEGUN, LORD DIMITRI!



EXCELLENT!

WE'LL FINALLY TAKE BACK WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN OURS ALL THOSE LONG YEARS AGO!

WITH TERROR AND INTIMIDATION AS OUR WEAPON OF CHOICE--



--WE SHALL CRUSH ANY AND ALL RESISTANCE!

AND THEN, WHEN THE CITIZENRY LOOK FOR A SAVIOR--



--WE SHALL GIVE THEM ONE!



LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE--

--THAT PARAGON OF VIRTUE--



-- A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF THE TECHNOLOGY NOW CANDIDATE--

--PRAVDA!!

HAIL DIMITRI!
IMMORTAL DIMITRI!

HE SHALL EVER
ENDURE!

ENERGIZED BY THE
EMERALD, HIS POWER
IS LIMITLESS!

FIRST SHALL
ECHIDNAOPOLIS FALL
TO HIM, THEN MOBIUS
PRIME ITSELF!

HAIL
DIMITRI!

**PRO ART BY
HARVEY
MERCADOOCASIO.
COLOR & ENJOY!**

